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AN ARABIC VERSION OF THE ABGAR-LEGEND.

BY PROFESSOR R. J. H. GOTTHEIL, PH. D.,

Columbia College in the City of New York.

It is not my intention to discuss here the interesting legend which is connected with the early history of Edessa as a christian city. That has lately been done with much learning and care.¹ I wish only to call attention to the following Arabic version which, I believe, has not been known heretofore—and to point out with what lines in the development of the legend it runs parallel.

Tixeront has collected (*loc. cit.* p. 28) the titles of four Arabic MSS. of the Abgar legend. The vatican text he has himself published at the end of the volume. With this our MS. has many points in common: but it is easy to see that it is greatly amplified. The one published by Ludovicus de Dieu² is not accessible to me at present.

A glance is enough to show us that the chief interest of the writer lies in the legend regarding the image of Jesus, rather than in that of the letters between him and Abgar. It belongs, therefore, to the Byzantine line of development. It is not necessary to adduce proof for this statement. We can go one step further, and can fix upon the Greek MS. which evidently lies back of our Arabic text.

There is a MS. in the Imperial Library at Vienna (*cod. theol. graec.* 315) which has been described by Lambecius, and of which Lipsius has given some extracts.³ The scope of both texts is the same: the letters of Abgar and Jesus; the story of the picture put on the handkerchief; the second image made on a brick at Heliopolis; the healing of the lame man; the healing of Abgar himself; the mission of Thaddaeus and the baptism of Abgar. Some of the characteristic additions in *cod.* 315 to the account in Eusebius are found again here: e. g., *καὶ γυναικα ἐν ῥύσει αἵματος ἀφαμένην σου ἰάσω* = *وأمرأة نازفة الدم لما لمست يديك فبريت*. So also the addition *καὶ ἡ πόλις σου ἦτις καλεῖται ἔδεσσα* = *وللمدينة الرها*;⁴ although some of the additions in *cod.* 315 are wanting in the Arabic.

For the sake of comparison I have reprinted the four continuous extracts of *cod.* 315 as published by Lipsius.

¹ Tixeront, *Les origines de l'Église d'Édesse*, etc. Paris, 1888. Dashian, *Zur Abgar-Sage*. WZKM. iv., pp. 17 sqq.

² Tixeront, *loc. cit.* p. 28. Lipsius, *Die Edessenische Abgar-Sage*, p. 20. Nestle, *De Santa Cruce*, p. 83.

³ *Loc. cit.* pp. 16, 21, 56, 59, 62.

⁴ Lipsius, p. 16.

αὕτη δέ μου ἐπιστολὴ ὅπου ἂν προβληθῇ εἴτε ἐν δίκῃ ἢ ἐν δικαστηρίῳ, εἴτε ἐν ὁδῷ εἴτε ἐν θαλάσῃ, εἴτε ἐν ῥηγμάσιν [l. ῥηγούσιν] εἴτε ἐν πυρέσσουσιν ἢ φρικώσιν ἢ ἐκβράζουσιν ἢ κατάδεσμον ἔχωσιν [l. ἔχουσιν] ἢ ὑπέρβρασιν, ἢ φαρμακευθεῖσιν ἢ ὅσα τούτοις ὁμοια, διαλυθήσονται. ἔστω δὲ ὁ φορῶν αὐτὴν ἄνθρωπος ἀπεχόμενος ἀπὸ παντὸς πονηροῦ πράγματος, καὶ λεγέτω· αὕτη μὲν εἰς ἴασιν εἶναι [ἔσται?] καὶ χαράν βέβαιαν. διότι ὁ λόγος γραπτὸς γέγραπται τῇ ἰδίᾳ μου χειρὶ μετὰ τῆς σφραγίδος τῆς ἐμῆς. αἰτινες εἰσὶν ἐντετυπωμέναι [sic] τῇ ἐπιστολῇ ταύτῃ ἑπτὰ σφραγίσιν. *T. Φ. X. E. Y. P. A.* ἰησοῦς χριστὸς υἱὸς θεοῦ καὶ υἱὸς μαρίας ψυχὴν φέρων ἐν δύο φύσεσιν γνωριζόμενος, θεὸς καὶ ἄνθρωπος. τῶν δὲ σφραγίδων ἡ λύσις ἦν αὕτη. ὁ μὲν *T* δηλοῖ, ὅτι ἔκων ἐπάγγην ἐν σταυρῷ. τὸ δὲ *Φ*, ὅτι φιλὸς ἄνθρωπος οὐκ εἰμί, ἀλλὰ ἄνθρωπος κατὰ ἀλήθ. τὸ δὲ *X*, ὅτι ἀναπέπαιμαι ὑπὸ τῶν χειρῶν βίμ. τὸ *E*, ἐγὼ θεὸς πρῶτος ἐγὼ καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα, καὶ πλὴν ἐμοῦ οὐκ ἔστι θεὸς ἕτερος. τὸ *Y*, ὑψηλὸς βασιλεὺς καὶ θεὸς τῶν θεῶν. τὸ *P*, ῥύστης εἰμὶ τοῦ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένους. τὸ *A*, δι' ὅλου καὶ διηγεκῶς καὶ διὰ παντὸς ζῶ καὶ διαμένω εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. ταύτας οὖν τὰς σφραγίδας ἐχάραξα ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ ὁ χαράξας τὰς πλάκας τὰς δοθείσας τῷ μωσῇ.

καὶ δεξάμενος ὁ αὐγαρος τὴν τοῦ κυρίου ἐπιστολήν, ἀκούσας ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἰουδαῖοι ἐπείγονται [cod. ἐπήγοντε] τοῦ ἀποκτεῖναι τὸν κύριον. πέμψας οὖν αὐτίκα ἐπ' αὐτὸν (?) ταχυδρόμον τῇ τέχνῃ ζώγραφον τοῦ λαβεῖν τὸ ὁμοίωμα τοῦ κυρίου. καὶ εἰσελθόντος τοῦ ταχυδρόμου εἰς τὰ προπύλαια ἱεροσολύμων ὑπήντησεν ὁ κύριος αὐτῷ [cod. αὐτόν]. καὶ διαλεχθεὶς μετ' αὐτοῦ εἶπεν αὐτῷ. κατὰσκοπος εἶ ἄνθρωπε. ἐκεῖνος δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸν εἶπεν· ἀπεσταλμένος εἰμὶ ὑπὸ αὐγάρου θεάσασθαι ἰησοῦν τὸν ναζωραῖον τοῦ λαβεῖν τὸ ὁμοίωμα τοῦ [cod. τὸ] προσώπου αὐτοῦ. καὶ συνετάξατο οὖν ὁ ἰησοῦς παραγενέσθαι αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὴν συναγωγὴν· τῇ δὲ ἐξῆς ἀπελθὼν ὁ ἰησοῦς ἐπὶ τῆς συναγωγῆς, ἐκαθέζετο διδάσκων τοὺς ὄχλους. ὁ δὲ ταχυδρόμος εἰσελθὼν ἔστη εἰς τὸ προπύλαιον ζωγραφῶν τὸ ὁμοίωμα τοῦ ἰησοῦ. καὶ μὴ δυναμένου καταλαβέσθαι τὴν μορφὴν τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ, κατέλαβε καὶ ὁ σύνδρομος αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὠθήσας αὐτὸν εἶπεν· εἴσελθε καὶ ἀπόδος ἡν περιέχεις σινδόνα τοῦ αὐγάρου [τοῦ τοπάρχου] καὶ δεσπότου ἡμῶν ἐπὶ τῆς συναγωγῆς. καὶ εἰσελθὼν ἐπὶ πάντων ἔπεσεν εἰς τοὺς πόδας τοῦ ἰησοῦ ἀποδοῦναι αὐτῷ τὴν σινδόνα. καὶ λαβὼν ὕδωρ ὁ κύριος ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ ἀπενίψατο τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπιθεὶς τὴν σινδόνα ἐπὶ τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ ἀνεζωγραφήθη [cod. ἀνεζωγραφίσθ.]. καὶ ἐγένετο τὸ ὁμοίωμα τοῦ ἰησοῦ ἐπ' αὐτὴν, ὥστε

θαυμάζειν πάντας τοὺς καθημένους μετ' αὐτοῦ. καὶ δοὺς τὴν σινδόνα τῷ ταχυδρόμῳ ἀπέστειλεν πρὸς τὸν αὐγαρον.

ἔλθόντες οὖν οἱ ταχυδρόμοι ὡς μιλίου ἐνὸς τῆς πόλεως ἐδέσσης συρόμενός τις εὐρέθη κατὰ τὴν ὁδόν. καὶ ἀψάμενος τῆς ἁγίου σινδόνης εὐθέως ἤλετο καὶ περιεπάτη καὶ εἰσελθὼν ὁρομαῖος πρὸς τὴν ἰδίαν μητέρα χαίρων καὶ ἀγαλλιώμενος καὶ θεαθεὶς ὑπὸ πάντων. ἐθαύμαζον ἐπὶ τῇ γεγονότι εἰς αὐτὸν καὶ ἔλεγον. οὐχ οὗτος ἦν ὁ συρόμενος τῇσδε τῆς χήρας ὁ υἱός; καὶ εὐθέως ἀνγνέχθη τῷ βασιλεῖ αὐγάφῳ περὶ αὐτοῦ. καὶ μετακαλεσάμενος αὐτὸν ὁ βασιλεὺς λέγει αὐτῷ· πῶς ἰάθης; ἀπεκρίθη ἐκεῖνος καὶ εἶπεν ὡς ἀπὸ μιλίου ἐνὸς παρεγενόμην τῆς πόλεως αἰτῶν. καὶ τις ἤφατο μου καὶ ἀνωρθώθην καὶ περιεπάτησα. ὁ δὲ αὐγαρος ὑπέλαβεν, ὅτι ὁ χριστὸς ἦν καὶ πέμψας εὔρε τὸν ταχυδρόμον μετὰ τοῦ συνδρόμου αὐτοῦ, ἐπιφέροντας [cod.τες] τὴν τοῦ χριστοῦ εἰκόνα. καὶ ἔλθόντων αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὸ παλάτιον ἐδέξατο αὐτοὺς ἐν χαρᾷ καὶ ἀσπασίως ὁ αὐγαρος κατακείμενος ἐπὶ κλίνης. ἐξέστη καὶ δεξιόμενος τὴν σινδόνα εἰς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ μετὰ πίστεως ἵαθη παραχρῆμα. μετὰ δὲ τὸ ἀναληφθῆναι τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἰησοῦν χριστὸν ἀπέστειλε θαδδαῖον ἐν ἐδέσσει τῇ πόλει τοῦ ἰάσασθαι αὐγάφου πᾶσαν [R. καὶ πᾶσαν] μαλακίαν. ἔλθων οὖν ὁ θαδδαῖος καὶ λαλήσας αὐτῷ τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου καὶ κατηχήσας ἐκατέβη ἐπὶ τὴν πηγὴν τὴν λεγομένην κερασσά καὶ ἐβάπτισεν αὐτὸν πανοικί. καὶ εὐθέως ἐκαθερίσθη αὐτοῦ τὸ πάθος. καὶ ἡγαλλιάσατο τῷ πνεύματι δοξάζων καὶ εὐλογῶν τὸν θεὸν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. ἀμήν.

ἔλθων οὖν ὁ ταχυδρόμος καὶ ὁ σύνδρομος αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἔμειναν ἕξω πόλεως ὀνόματι ἱεράπολις εἰς κεραμαρεῖον [I. κεραμεῖον]. Καὶ φοβηθέντες ἔχρυσαν τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ χριστοῦ ἀνὰ μεταξὺ δύο κεραμιδίων καὶ ἐκοιμήθησαν. κατὰ δὲ τὸ μεσονύχτιον ἐφάνη στύλος πυρὸς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἔστη ἐπάνω, οὗ ἦν ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ κυρίου. Καὶ ἰδὼν ὁ καστροφύλαξ τῆς πόλεως τὸν στύλον τοῦ πυρός ἐφώνησεν φωνὴν μεγάλην, καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ὁ λαὸς τῆς πόλεως καὶ ἰδόντες τὴν ἐν σινδόνι εἰκόνα τοῦ κυρίου ἤθελον αὐτὴν λαβεῖν. Καὶ ψηλαφήσαντες εὔρου ὅτι ἀνεζωγραφήθη εἰς ἓν τῶν κεραμιδίων καὶ ἔλαβον τὸ κεραμίδιον, εἰσάγσαν ἑάσαντες τοὺς ταχυδρόμους πορεύεσθαι.

The MS. from which the present text is taken is now in the Library of Columbia College. It is incomplete at the end. Its general title is as follows:

بسم الابن والروح القدس الاله الواحد. نبتدى نكتب اخبار

قصص الشهد او القديسين الذين ارضوا الله بصالح اعمالهم وصفة سيرتهم الفاضلة صلواتهم وبركاتهم تحفظنا واياكم سرمد امين.

The contents are apochryphal in character. The MS. is quite modern, and is written without a too strict regard for the niceties of grammar or of correct spelling. In fact many very modern—and, at times perhaps, incorrect—forms have found entrance.⁵ But it is impossible to tell the exact date of the original text; and it would have been wrong to correct all things according to the *Mufaṣṣal*.⁶ I have therefore only called attention to what seemed to me to be evident mistakes.

نكتب رسالة ملك الرها الابجر رسلها الى ربنا ايسوع المسيح.
قد بلغنى عن عجايبك. وعنك انك بلا سحر ولا دوا بتشفى المرضى.
وانك بكلمة واحدة. وهبت للعميان النظر وللمرنا الشفى وللخرص
التكلم وللصم السماع وللمرضا الشفا وتطرد الارواح النجسة بكلمتك.
5 والذى دحرهم الوجع والعداب تشفيهم وتقيم الموتى وامراة نازقة⁷
الدم لما لمست يديك⁸ فبريت فيا سيدى بلغنى عنك ظنيت في
قلبك انك الله او انك ابن الله نذلت من السما وفعلت هذا كله. يا
سيدى فمن اجل هذا اسالك انا واتوسل اليك ان تاتى لعندى وان كنت
انا غير مستحق اتحنن علىّ واحضر لى تشفينى من هذا الالام
10 الذى فى وبلغنى ايضا ان اليهود قد مقتوك وهم ان يظلموك وليس
خافيك اننى انا فى مدينة صغيرة لطيلنة⁹ اشهيت ان تكون لى انا
وانت ولك السلام كما تريد *

جواب رسالة الملك الابجر الذى هى من عند سيدنا يسوع
المسيح.

⁵ E. g. بتشفى l. c. cf. Spitta, *Grammatik des Arab. Vulgardialects von Ägypten*, p. 203 (ZDMG. 44, 543). JA. 1887. Extrait No. 22, p. 8. نذل l. 50, for نزل. Spitta, loc. cit., p. 18. مثل for مثل.

⁶ See Sachau, *Chronologie Orientalischer Völker von Albērūnī*. Intro. p. lxx.

⁷ MS. نازقة. * Conjectural: the MS. is blotted here. ⁹ So the MS. Read لطيفة.

يقول هكذا طوباك يا ابجر وللمدينتك الرها. طوباك لانك لم¹⁵
 تراني وامنت ومن الان وهبت لك العافية والشفاء واما ما كتبت
 لي من اننى¹⁰ اجى اليك ناولا واجب لى ان اتبعت العمل الذى وردت
 لاجله واصعد الى عند من ارسلنى ارسل لك احد من تلاميذى وهو
 يشفى مرضك ويهب لك الحيا الداعية والسلامة لك والى من في²⁰
 مدينتك الذى لا ينبغي لاحدا من الناس ان يقدر عليها الى انقضا
 العالم امين *

يا خوه¹¹ هذه الرسالة مكتوبة بيد ربنا والاهنا يسوع المسيح وختمها
 بختامة¹² سبعة ختوم حروف يونانية بيد الخاصة الخاتم الاول يدل
 اننى باختياري تقدمت للصلب والثانى¹³ بانى انسان تام والاه²⁵
 بالحقيقة والثالث فاننى رفعت على الشاروبيم¹⁴ والرابع ان الاله الاول
 وليس الاله اخر سواى الخامس ملك عالى انا والاه الالهت¹⁵ السادس
 صرت مخلص السابع بالكلية فى كل حين انا حى دايم الى دهر
 الدهرين. هذه الرسالة من حملها براسه تنجيه من خطر الطريق
 ومن واجه الحكام والساطين تخلص ومن به حمار دية تشفيه ومن³⁰
 بهم ارواح سوا وشى من السكر ينكبيهم ومن كان فى مجا وفى نهر
 او فى قتال او فى كل شى سينم على الانسان تجل عليه وان كان
 مقعد بتريه ويكون حاملها محفوظ من كل اعمال الشرير وتكون له
 شفا لروحه وجسده ويكون له الفرح والسرور دايم سمردان امين .

¹⁰ MS. has ائى .

¹¹ Read يا اخوة .

¹² MS. بختامت . In other places I have simply substituted ت for ت .

¹³ MS. والثانى . In other places I have simply substituted ث for ت . Cf. Mihail Sab-
 bāg's *Grammatik der Arab. Umgangssprache in Syrien und Ägypten*, p. 12.

¹⁴ Cf. Dozy, *Supplement*, i. 715. Muḥīṭ al Muḥīṭ, p. 1802.

¹⁵ Read الالهات .

35 فلما قبل الابجر رسالة الرب فدا دشوقه وغرامة¹⁶ به وحالاً وجه مصور ماهر جداً حادثاً فارسله لكي ان يمسلم بمسلم الرب وبمسلم وجهه¹⁷ فسار المصور في الطريق حتى انه التقا بالرب سبكانه فخطابه قايلًا انت ايها الانسان كلوس فاجابه قايلًا انا مرسل من عند ابجر لكي انظر يسوع الناصري واتميز مثال¹⁸ وجهته وامثلها فامره الرب ان يقيم مع الجمع وعرفه في حاله انه هو يسوع الناصري فجلس يسوع معلم الشعوب فاراد المصور يتم امر سيده فوقف مقابل الرب ليصور مثالة وجهه فما كان يقدر يمثل وجه الرب فقال الرب للرسول اين السفينة التي معك فتقدم الرسول مسرعاً نكحوا الرب وطرح نفسه على قدميه ودفع له السفينة قدام 45 الشعوب فاخذها السيد على يديه وغسل وجهه بماء ومسحه بتلك السفينة حتى تعجب الرسول المصور وكل الجمع تعجب فدفعها للرسول فاخذها وهو فرحان الرسول وانطلق الى عند سيده الابجر وهو ساير في الطريق هو ورفاقه فانتهوا الى مدينة مبسج فباتوا خارج المدينة في فاخورة الفخار فوضعوا صورة المسيح بين قريميين 50 خوفاً من اللصوص وناموا ففي تلك الليل نذل¹⁹ عامود نار اخضر ووقف على صورة المسيح فلما مر²⁰ حراس تلك المدينة فنظر تلك العجب العظيم فتعجب فصرخ بصوت عالي حتى خرجها جميع الناس لخارج المدينة ونظروا العجب فهموا ان ياخذوها من

¹⁶ MS. وعرمة.

¹⁷ MS. وجهه a mistake, if we ought not to read وجهه.

¹⁸ MS. here and in other places مسال. Cf. Spitta *loc. cit.* p. 9.

¹⁹ I. e. نزل.

²⁰ I. e. مر.

الرسول ففتشو بين القرميدين فراوها قد لزقت بواحدة من
القرميدين فاخذ هو قرميدة الصورة وارضاهم في قرميدة الثانية⁵⁵
فسار الرسول حتى دنى في مدينة الرها مقدار ميل وان بانسان مقعد
لمس بيده الصورة فللوقت فبرى حالاً فمشى قايمًا وجرى لعند امه
لمدينة مسرعاً فلما بصرت امه والعالم تعجبوا وصاروا جايرين
ويقولوا بعضهم لبعض ما هذا ابن²¹ الامله المقعد فوصل خبره للملك⁶⁰
فاحضره لعنده وقال له كيف بريت فاجابه قايلًا اننى من مقدار ميل
واحد من المدينة وانا جالس اطلب صدقة من الناس وان بواحد
مارا في الطريق فالتمنى فللوقت قمت واقفا فافتكر الملك
الابكر ان مراسله جابه وصورة المسيح معه. فارسل بلقاهم فوجد
الرسول مع رفيقه حاملين صورة السيد المسيح فلما وصلوا الى البلاط⁶⁵
اخذ الملك تلك الصورة على يديه وهو مطروح على السرير من
مدة ستة سنين وسويه فللوقت برى بالساعة وتعافوا²² ان سيدنا
يسوع المسيح بعد صعوده الى السما ارسل تداوس تلاميذه²³ لنى اعد
الابكر فشفاه من كافة امراضه وعرفه طريق الحق وكلام الحق
وانكدر الى عين ما تسما كارسا فعمده بها وجميع²⁴ اهل بيته بسم الاب⁷⁰
والابن والروح القدس الاله واحد وتهلل بروح القدس وهو يسبح
اليه المجد الى دهر الداهرين فهذا ماء²⁵ انتها اليها من امر الملك
السعيد الابكر وتمننه سبحانه الله تعالى في ملكه امين. تم امين.

²¹ MS. هداين.

²² ? ويقال

²³ Read. تداوس احد من.

²⁴ MS. ولجميع.

²⁵ Sic!

كما يقول اطلبوا تجدوا واقرعوا يفتح لكم ينجيكم اليه تعالى من
جميع الشدايد كما نجى²⁶ هذا الملك العسيد امين تم امين .

We shall write the letter of the King of Edessa, Abgar, which he sent to our master Jesus, the Messiah.

I have heard of thy wonderful deeds and that thou dost heal the sick without enchantment and without medicine; and that thou, by means of one word, hast given sight to the blind and to the lame recovery, to the dumb speech, to the deaf hearing, to the sick healing. Thou casteth out unclean spirits by thy word, and those whom pain and punishment injure thou healest. Thou raisest the dead; and the woman flowing with blood, when she touched thy hands became well. And now, O Master, I have heard that thou thinkest in thy heart that thou art God or the Son of God. Thou hast come down from heaven and hast done all this, O Master! On this account I beg and request of thee that thou come to me. Although I am not worthy, do thou show mercy to me and come so that thou mayest heal me from this pain which is in me. I have also heard that the Jews hate thee and wish to do thee harm. It is not hidden from thee that I am in a city, small and beautiful. I wish that it be for me and for thee. And to thee be peace—as thou wilt.

Answer to the letter of King Abgar which came from our master Jesus, the Messiah.

He says as follows: Blessed art thou, O Abgar and thy city Edessa. Blessed art thou, in that thou didst believe in me, not having seen me. From the present time I have given thee health and healing. Now regarding that about which thou hast written to me that I should come to thee, first it is necessary that I should complete the work for the sake of which I have come down. And [when] I shall have ascended unto Him that sent me, I shall send to thee one of my disciples that he may heal thy disease and give to thee eternal life. Peace be to thee and to those who are in thy city, which no man will be able to take to the end of the world. Amen.

O brother! This letter was written by the hand of our master and our God, Jesus, the Messiah, and he sealed it with seven seals in Grecian characters by means of a eunuch.²⁷

The first seal showed "I, of my own free will, went to the cross." The second, "that I am a perfect²⁸ man and God in very truth." The third, "that I have ascended to the cherubim." The fourth "that [I] am God, the first,

²⁶ MS. *نجا*.

²⁷ I do not find this form in the dictionaries: but it must be some derivative of *ḥaṣa(y)* "he drew forth, or castrated his testicles" (Lane S. V.).

²⁸ Or *real*.

and that there is no other God beside me." The fifth, "that I am an exalted King and God of Gods." The sixth, "I am the Saviour." The seventh, "altogether, at all times I live, existing forever." Whoever bears this letter upon his head, it will save him from the danger of the road; and he who meets wise men and rulers, it will spare him; he who has a strong fever, it will heal him; and those who have evil spirits or any other form of enchantment, it will free them. He who is on the road,²⁹ or on a river, or in a battle or in anything that happens to a man, it will release him [from his difficulty]. And if anyone be seated in ————— and carry it, he will be free from all unpleasant labor. It will be medicine for his spirit and his body: and joy and gladness will be to him forever and ever. Amen.

Now when Abgar had received the letter of the master, his desire and his wish grew strong; and at once he sent a very skillful sculptor. He directed him to go to procure a likeness of the master and of his face. Then the sculptor went on his way until he reached the master, praised be he! Then he spake to him saying: Verily thou art a sculptor.³⁰ Then he answered him, saying, I am sent by Abgar to see Jesus, the Nazarene, to see the likeness of his face and to picture it. The master commanded him to take his place with the multitude. Then he told him of himself that he was Jesus the Nazarene. Then Jesus sat down to teach the people and the sculptor wished to fulfil the behest of his superior. He placed himself opposite the master in order to paint the likeness of his face. But he was not able to picture the likeness of the face of the master. Then said the master to the messenger, where is the handkerchief(?)³¹ which thou hast. Then the messenger came quickly to the master and threw himself at his feet and gave him the handkerchief before all the people. Then the master took it in his hands, washed his face with the water and wiped it with the handkerchief so that the sculptor who had been sent and all the people wondered. Then he gave it to the messenger who seized it joyfully and went to his superior, Abgar. This one was journeying upon the road with his escort. They had come to the city MBSJ.³² They remained over night outside the city in the shop of a potter: and placed the image of the Messiah between two bricks out of fear of robbers. Then they slept. Now during the night there came down a dark pillar of fire upon the image of the Messiah. And when the guard of that city passed by and saw this great wonder, they were amazed and cried out with a loud cry until a multitude of people came

²⁹ The lexica do not give this derivation of جاء; but it must correspond to the Greek ἐν ὁδῷ.

³⁰ In the Greek text, we read κατάσκοπος εἰς ἀνθρώπου.

³¹ MS. السفينة which is undoubtedly a mistake. Ibn el Athir, VIII., p. 302, 21 has منديل cf. also Tixeront, *loc. laud.* p. 199.

³² Read منبج Mabug. Greek has ἱεράπολις.

to the outskirts of the city. They saw the wonder and desired to take it (i. e. the picture) from the messenger. They searched between the two bricks, and saw that it was fixed fast to one of them. Then [the messenger] caught hold of one of the bricks, and gave them the second one. Then the messenger journeyed until he had come to within one mile of the city of Edessa. Here he lighted upon a man deprived of the use of his limbs who touched the picture with his hand. At that very moment he became completely well and went on his way standing upright. He came quickly to the city to his mother and when the other people saw him they wondered, and came saying to each other: what has come over the widow's son who had not the use of his legs? His story reached the King who had him brought to him. Then he said to him, how hast thou become healed? He answered him saying, behold I was seated about a mile distant from the city. I was seated looking for alms from men when something passed secretly up the road and touched me and at once I arose upright. And King Abgar understood at once that this messenger had come back to him with the picture of the Messiah. Then he sent to meet them and he found the messenger with his escort, bearing the image of the master, the Messiah. Now when they had come to the palace, the King took this image in his hands, he having lain upon his couch for a little over six years. At once, at that moment, he was healed and became well.

Now, our master, Jesus the Messiah, after his ascent to heaven sent Thaddaeus [one of] his disciples to Abgar and he healed him from all his sickness. He taught him the way of life and the word of truth. And he went down to a well of water which was called كارسا,³³ and he baptized him in it and all the people of his household in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God. And he gloried in the Holy Spirit and praised God who is to be glorified unto all generations.

Now this is what has reached us about the glorious King Abgar and the doings(?) of God, praised and exalted be, in his kingdom. Amen! Amen! As is said, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.³⁴ May God the exalted one free us from every misfortune as he freed this exalted King! Amen! Amen!

³³ In Greek *κερασά*.

³⁴ Matthew 7:7.